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Excerpt From The Transcript of the
CIA Career Service Board Meeting
Held on 21 May 1953

SUBJECT: Discussion Concerning Item Two "The Process of Selecting New Career Employees" dated 17 April 1953, with Comments By The Office Career Service Boards

25X1A9A MR. KIRKPATRICK: The minutes are approved as presented. Item 2 is something on which I might say we got a wide divergency from the comments of opinion as to the process of selecting new career employees, the original presentation by the Professional Selection Panel and the digest of comments which Mr. [] prepared by the various offices. Now would you gentlemen care to comment on this particular item? I think you can see that just running down the various items starting with paragraph 3.e. "Appointments to the career staff shall be made on a trial-service basis." There is fairly general agreement there should be a trial-service basis in the Agency. There was a variety of opinion on the length of trial-service. I would say the majority came out in favor of a year. Some came out in favor of two years that the Panel selected, but the larger majority was in favor of a year, which actually is closer to the Civil Service conception today. There was a divergence of opinion as to whether the period should or should not be extended in individual cases. Some of the offices felt it should and some felt it shouldn't. There seems to be fairly general agreement that there should be a final determination made as to whether individuals are suitable for career employment, and then the offices varied from that point, some feeling that he should be terminated immediately at that point and others feeling that he could go into the structure but not as a Career Service employee if he failed to match up to the general criteria for a career officer.

On item e., "Members of the career staff may occupy either non-professional or professional positions," there is much unanimity. Everybody agreed that that was true. There seems to be a divergence of opinion as to whether there should be selection.

I would recommend that the way this be handled is that the office comments be referred back to the Professional Selection Panel to resubmit as close as possible to what the majority of the offices felt toward the criteria, and if they feel strongly enough that they wish to render a minority opinion, they should do so, but to try and present to us in final form for approval a system for selecting new employees. Is that agreeable to the Board?

MR. AMORY: There is only one thing, and that is asking them to go along with sort of a numerical majority. I think I would say to consider . . .

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COLONEL BAIRD: I just wonder what would be gained by that, Kirk, because you have a member of the Selection Panel sitting today, and he probably is better informed on it than I am, but I was present at one of the meetings as an Advisory Member and listened to all the discussions which, I think, prompted their recommendations, and I would wonder whether they would be likely to change them. There was quite a bit of unanimity with an understanding, I think, at the time of the objections.

25X1A9A MR. []: I think at least we could clarify some of the language because it was not clear to everyone just what we were recommending, and I think possibly some of the comments that the Office Career Service Boards have made might open new avenues of thought, and they might want to reconsider, so unless there is great haste of this, there may be some profit in going back, although I wouldn't consider it essential.

MR. KIRKPATRICK: I don't consider it a matter of urgency that we get it down in writing. I would rather get it right the first time and have it threshed out thoroughly than just have it on the record.

25X1A9A MR. []: There is another angle. I think there are about two new members on the Panel that were not members when this first came up, so I don't know whether this fact represents the Panel's considered opinion now or not.

MR. HELMS: Let's refer it back. There is one thing which when it is referred back I think they might make clear in their paper. That is, what they mean in f. down here, "The final determination of suitability for career employment (in d above) shall, for employees in professional positions, be made by a special selection process." They ought to spell out what they had in mind there because I think it is the view in our part of the world that that determination ought to be made by a Career Service Board at the juncture. I think it would be a good idea if they would spell that out.

MR. KIRKPATRICK: Are there any other comments?

25X1A9A GENERAL MORRIS: I would like to bring out that point of the Personnel Office . . . the Evaluation Reports reviewed by those office boards. It was necessary.

[] Do you understand the office be asked to come up with any new ideas they have on this?

MR. KIRKPATRICK: If they so desire.

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25X1 [] Not just provide this, but all the comments by the various components. That may change our minds a great deal on this thing, and I would like to see some of the problems I think we are going to be faced with . . .

Now the trial-service period two years because most of my recruits go overseas immediately after they are trained and don't come back until sometime after their years are up, and we don't get to see much of them and don't have an appraisal of them, but I felt the trial service period was ...

25X1 MR. KIRKPATRICK: I think that would be very valuable because I think with [] experience in the military service that background of what you get into when you bind yourself in fairly strict legislative structure is also very pertinent this day from a practical point of view. We are not going to get legislation through this Congress. We may get it through the next Congress, so we have time to think about it, so I think we ought to be prepared to tell the employees of this Agency of what we are thinking about at an early date, that Career Service can mean something to them, so if you will do that, that would be a great help.

25X1 [] I thought from what General Smith said he wanted the whole outfit, and then if that is the case, you go back to selection -- possibly a West Point of CIA -- in which you eliminated people during that training period so you know pretty well what they are going to be for the long haul. If they are going to go through all of that, then you have to have benefits which come only by legislation, which I think is security. I think it is a tough problem.

GENERAL MORRIS: I also want to mention we want to be very careful about legislating that career service. We ought to wait and not try to do it this year, and wait and see if you want to do it or not because in

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MR. KIRKPATRICK: Well, I think we will have to wait this through practicality anyway, General.

COLONEL BAIRD: I would like to ask [] one more question having again sat in on these meetings. I have heard the members of the Panel say at least a half dozen times that they would like to have more guidance from the Career Service Board than they are getting. Now do you feel you have enough to go back, or do you feel the Career Service Board should give the Panel more guidance than we have?

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MR. [] Well, of course, guidance. If the Board here decided that you wanted to adhere close to Civil Service Regulations, now that would preclude considering a proposal that might necessitate special legislation. We wouldn't have to go through all of that discussion, you see, if there was a consensus here that would limit our task, and on some of these main points if there is a view here, why, of course, it would be helpful to have it.

MR. KIRKPATRICK: I could certainly make a statement on that. It is my strong opinion we should not consider ourselves within the confines of Civil Service. We should develop a Career Service and if necessary go out and get the legislation that is required. I think the Director is prepared at any time to discuss that matter with the President when we come to that bridge. The previous Directors have made this statement, which the present Director has adhered to, that we live within the Civil Service Regulations, but the day will come when we want to make the recommendation to him that we change that, and I think that is the whole purpose of a Career Service Board and these deliberations to discover that. I think that if we considered ourselves within that framework that an awful lot of this discussion is a waste of time. Does anybody disagree with that?

MR. AMORY: I think it would be extraordinarily difficult ever to get a Career Service that blanketed the entire Agency.

Do we want to have economists and scientists and geographers second-class citizens. I just say we have to go awful slow.

MR. KIRKPATRICK: There are a tremendous number of considerations. Just to mention another, and that is the tenure of office. You have a nucleus that is career service. They can be reasonably assured when budget cuts and personnel cuts -- which may happen some day in the foreseeable future -- come that the career service will stay and the non-career service will be the first to go.

COLONEL BAIRD: Bob, that term "second-class" citizen was not the intention at all of the Panel. The second-class . . . that category actually would take in an economist you wanted brought in on a lateral entry for a two-year or three-year hitch who intended to go back to industry or back to his educational institution at the end, and it is by no means considered in a second-class category, but a different category, and not probably a CIA Career Service. There seems to be a lot of misunderstanding on that.

MR. KIRKPATRICK: I think if we presented our top-level professionals with a CIA statement that they were CIA professionals, somewhere between 25% and 30% wouldn't sign it today. I don't think we should take any more time on this subject.

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